

To: 'bee4news@hotmail.com'[bee4news@hotmail.com]
From: Smith, Bonnie
Sent: Wed 2/26/2014 8:28:31 PM
Subject: your willingness to explore EPA OSCs to help HQ decision makers and communicators feel more confident in getting ahead of the story- SAVE

Dear Bob,

I've been at EPA a long time. I worked with you and some amazing communications people when you were at MDE. We were brave, honest, ready for anything and willing to admit some days 'we don't know. But, we are working diligently with all of our partners to figure this out. We understand you are concerned. EPA is committed to do our part."

Sitting in the All Hands Meeting today in Region 3, I wanted to stand up and say that your perception about when HQ communications and HQ management get involved in regional issues, is happening every day. It's not once and a while. It's all the time. It's painful. It's also in the way of EPA telling it's story in so many ways and so many venues. Clearly the All-Hands meeting is not the forum for this discussion.

There are so many issues in our region that get elevated is stifling. As press officer, I'm not able to regularly to talk about what EPA is doing, why, and how the community's health is being protected.

In a world of short attention spans and 24-7 news, we need communications that are nibble and responsive quickly. It's just not happening, and cannot happen if you need three to five levels of clearances to say something to a reporter on the phone or in the field.

Everyone **you** talked to about EPA's role in West Virginia told you were doing a amazing job. That's not what I was hearing from reporters covering the spill. And, the situation in West Virginia is not over.

The Public Affairs Directors meet with the counterparts, I understand that this is an issue that is on the agenda always - - the need for improved HQ/regional communications and coordination.

I appreciate your offer to do a hot-wash on the West Va. chemical spill communications with the media and the public. That might be an interesting intellectual exercise, but I doubt that anything would result from the discussion because of the dynamics of many not wanting to embarrass our RA or put others in a negative light.

I appreciate your enthusiasm for regional people to training people in HQ and, those they need to check in with while making decision, about how EPA management and communications can be prepared for emergencies on the national communications sides, as well as our regional OSCs are prepared to respond to them. Our OSCs are smart, brilliantly trained, great communicators, and when needed fearlessly take on immense challenges. We need our communications to be strong enough to support them.

I know that proper way for me to send this response and pre-proposal for training to you is. I send my draft approved by my team leader, then my division director, then the RA's Chief of Staff and then to the RA. We'd both be retired before that happened.

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